

# Move Of Dusty Ranch Job Should Bring Immediate Federal Succor

By Monte Noelke

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Page 13

MERTZON, Texas — A few weeks ago I mentioned plans to launch the first full-length movie of life on ranges of the short grass country. I explained that prior attempts to draw attention of the USDA to the ranchers plight had failed, and I hoped this movie would not only accomplish this goal but might also net me a check.

The latter, I noted is sorely needed because the idea for the movie came from my wife. She insists on being paid for same before any other expense or remunerations are settled.

At this writing I have learned quite a bit about movie making. Mainly, I now realize that if Mssrs. Sam Goldwyn and Darrel Zanuck had been introduced to the movie game by purchasing their first stories from their spouses as I did, the movie fans today would still be sitting in the parlor looking at slides instead of languishing in the splendor of the modern theater, watching torrid love scenes on a screen that — if it continues to grow — will some day be large enough to show the west wall of the Grand Canyon at close range.

Nevertheless I have made some headway. If the Actors' Guild doesn't report my choral group to the Border Patrol and if the wind will die down enough so the whole thing won't seem overdone, we should start shooting soon.

Here's how the show will start;

## Act. 1 — Scene 1

Place: A set of corrals located in the Edwards Plateau of Texas.

Time: Mid-March (however, since spring often forgets to come to this land of short grass and short cash, it could be the middle of May).

Scene: Two men who have obviously lost their boss of the Plains image and are becoming more similar to what he thinks of when he hears of the Weary Plowman are working some black cows through a dilapidated chute. Each man holds a piece of pipe. They are trying to lift a cow upright in the chute. A choral group can be heard and seen from time to time in the background. The wind rages, the air is filled with dust.

As a narrator opens the scene the choral group begins to hum "Nobody Knows The Trouble I've Seen."

Narrator: "This is a live ranch story made in Texas. The men you see are typical of ranchers throughout the U.S. They are an unselfish breed who've devoted their lives to raising the food and fiber this country needs, producing these products under conditions so bleak that their history makes the childhood of Romulus and Remus (who suckled a mamma coyote, you recall) sound like the early days of a Rockefeller heir."

(The wind begins howling so loud that the narrator's words and the choir's humming are drowned out. Then the wind subsides and the action begins.)

First Gent (trying to get his pipe underneath the cow): "And just to think that my mother got down on her knees and begged me to go to college."

Second Gent (the leader): "I believe if we had the windmill blocks and tackle hanging on a gin pole we could lift this cow where she could stand up. Where's the dadgum hotshot. I'll show this two-bit nellie which end is supposed to be up." (The choir sings "Home on the Range" with a marked Mexican accent.)

First Gent: "I wish I'd listened to mother."

Second Gent: "If this old cow would quit fighting and kicking, we might get enough ropes on her to get her up." (The choir pauses to chase their hats, disappearing from the camera; the wind whips additional dirt into the air).

First Gent: "My little brother was no dope. He went to work for the government 15 years ago. I bet he ain't trying to prize a cow up in weather that would cause the Sheik of Arabia to call off a camel race."

Second Gent: "That's It! Why don't we call the local USDA office to send a man out. Those boys can tell us how to get this old sapsucker up and probably will also know how to cure her of the habit." (As the scene fades out, the choir is singing "the Jolly Woodsman" to the tune of "Cielito Lindo." The First Gent is smiling ;the Second Gent has mounted his pickup and rushes to the house to call the USDA office.)

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This is how the first draft of the scenario looks. I plan to make the next scene open with a dashing entrance by a young USDA man who takes full command. Action will be added by the choir scattering in all directions because of the stranger's arrival in a government vehicle.

Suspense will be provided when the USDA lad finds he has misplaced the pamphlet pertaining to the uprighting of range cattle in a sub-standard chute.

I realize that explaining to the USDA how loyal we are to their cause is as difficult as trying to make an oldtime trail driver comprehend what "P.O." means at a modern auction ring. But considering how effective moving pictures can be, I have high hopes.